



Safety Statement

Academic Year

2024-2025

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Section 1 - Introduction and Contacts

1.1 Introduction

This Safety Statement is designed to address the particular arrangements for safe operation of the University of Limerick Kayak Club (ULKC). It should be read in conjunction with the University Safety Statement. The University Safety Statement sets out duties and responsibilities of staff, students and visitors as well as general policies and arrangements for safety within the University. It is the duty of all of us to take reasonable care of one's own health and safety and that of any other person who may be affected by our acts in order to maintain a safe and healthy working environment.

It is our intention to provide a safe and enjoyable environment in which to participate in paddle activities such as Kayaking and Canoeing. We aim to provide an environment that is conducive to learning the above sports in a manner that is not threatening to the student and is controlled. We adopt a 'Challenge by Choice', philosophy in all our activities, thus students are never pushed beyond their limits.

We believe that the safety of our members is of paramount importance above all other matters. In the event of their safety being compromised, the activity will be stopped immediately. It will not be continued until such a time that their safety can be assured.

An essential element of safety is knowledge of correct procedures and of dangers associated with each particular procedure or operation. This Safety Statement provides a framework within which safe practice of our sport is possible. It is important that the procedures in this document are followed for the prevention of accidents.

All students and instructors will comply with Canoeing Ireland guidelines while being a member of UL Kayak Club.

1.2 Contacts

Clubs and Societies Officers	Paul Lee	061 213477
	Aisling Ryan	0860435308
	Lisa Ryan	061 234891
	Jana Finucane	061 2377620
Captain	Isobel Reidy	083 0681679
Safety Officer	Odran Furlong	083 8621557
Secretary	Orlagh O'Regan	087 4617967
Limerick Regional		061 482219

St John's Hospital		061 462222
Police/Gardai		061 212400
Limerick City Fire and Rescue Service		061 407100

1.3 Annual Review

This Safety Statement shall be reviewed annually to adjust to any changes to any guidelines that have been referenced. This should happen within the first month of the handover to the new committee.

This includes but is not limited to reviewing: Canoeing Ireland's guidelines, Student Life's club guidelines, and club equipment manufacturers maintenance guidelines.

Section 2 - Paddler Definitions

2.1 Level of Personal Paddlers

University of Limerick Kayak club adheres to Canoeing Ireland guidelines/recommendations with relation to our members personal skills and proficiencies.



Level 1 skills Paddler:

This person has been assessed and certified to be able to perform fundamental Paddling skills on flatwater where no flow or obstacles are present.

<https://www.canoe.ie/level-1-paddlesport-skills/>

Level 2 Skills Paddler:

This person has been assessed and certified to be able to kayak safely and competently on flat water, Grade I rivers, and very sheltered coastal areas as a member of a group of peers.

- Be able to carry out basic safety techniques with the assistance of another member of the group or the person in the water.
- Be able to safely plan and carry out a trip in a flat-water environment considering all relevant factors.

<https://www.canoe.ie/level-2-kayak-skills/>

Level 3 River Skills Paddler:

This person has been assessed and certified to be able to kayak safely and competently on rivers up to and including Grade II rivers as a member of a group of peers.

- Be capable of negotiating obstacles likely to be encountered on Grade II rivers.
- Be capable of carrying out rescues likely to be encountered in a grade two environment with assistance.

<https://www.canoe.ie/level-3-river-kayak-skills/>

Level 3 Paddlesurf Skills Paddler:

This person has been assessed and certified to be able to kayak safely and competently in small surf (2-3 feet or waist height) conditions with belt fastened (ski) or wearing spray deck (kayak).

- Be capable of surf (2-3 feet or waist height) conditions with belt fastened (ski) or wearing spray deck (kayak).
- Assist in rescues.
- Have a basic understanding of etiquette and surf safety.
- <https://www.canoe.ie/level-3-paddlesurf-skills/>

Level 4 River skills Paddler:

This person has been assessed and certified to be able to Kayak safely and proficiently on rivers up to and including Grade III difficulty as part of a group of peers.

- Be capable of negotiating obstacles likely to be encountered on Grade III rivers.
- Deal competently with rescue situations that might occur on rivers up to and including rivers of Grade III difficulty.
- Develop group awareness.
- They must also have completed and obtained an RSR2 Certificate

<https://www.canoe.ie/level-4-river-kayak-skills/>

Level 5 River Skills Paddler:

This person has been assessed and certified to have the necessary skills, group awareness, and group management to kayak safely and competently on rivers up to and including rivers of Grade IV & advanced white-water difficulty.

- Deal competently with rescue situations which might occur on rivers up to and including rivers of Grade IV & advanced white-water difficulty.
- Deal competently with First Aid situations in a remote river environment.

<https://www.canoe.ie/level-5-river-kayak-skills/>

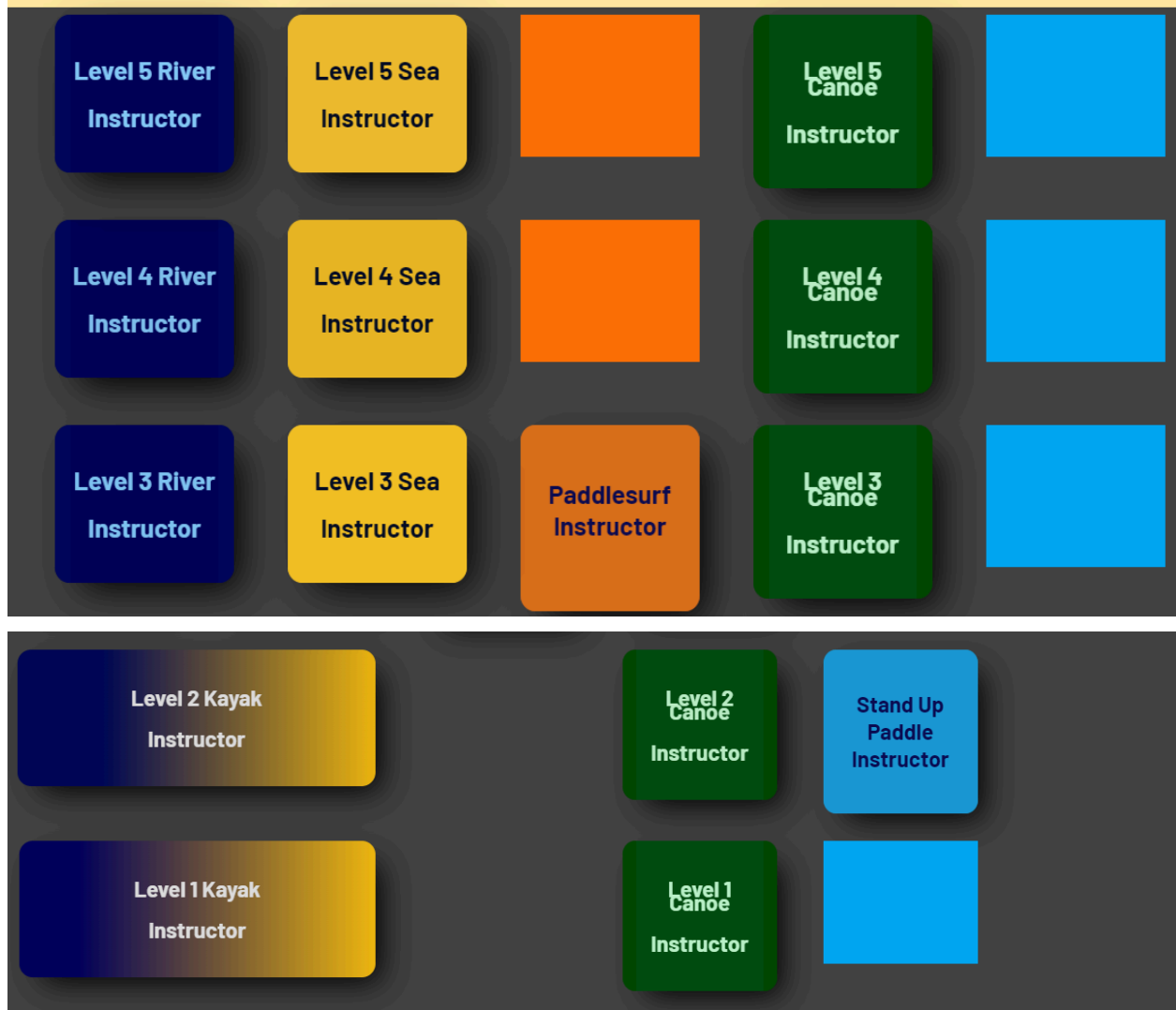
It is the responsibility of the Safety, Training and Development officer to organise relevant training and opportunities for all members to be certified for the various skill levels.

If any members have proficiency certificates in any other discipline such as Sea kayaking, Canoeing, etc., ULKC will refer back to the relevant schemes provided by canoeing Ireland here

<https://www.canoe.ie/paddle-skills-awards/>

2.2 Levels of Instructors

University of Limerick Kayak Club will adhere to Canoeing Ireland guidelines/recommendations with relation to using certified Instructors both internally in the club and externally of the club.



Level 1 Kayak Instructor:

This person is qualified to run static site introductory kayaking sessions on flat water with groups of up to 6 students. They are able to train and assess for the Level 1 Kayak Skills Award

A Level 1 Kayak Instructor is specifically not qualified to journey with groups and is restricted to static sessions only (i.e., same entry and exit point). Static site means travelling no more than approximately 300m from the get on point and no more than 50 metres offshore

<https://www.canoe.ie/level-1-kayak-instructor/>

Level 2 Kayak Instructor:

This person is qualified to instruct basic kayaking skills and lead kayaking journeys on flat water with groups of up to 6 students. They are able to train and assess for Levels 1 & 2 Kayak Skills Award. They are able to teach basic flat-water safety & rescue, and run RSR 1 training courses.

The Level 2 Instructor is specifically not qualified to journey across a lake or more than 50 metres offshore.

<https://www.canoe.ie/level-2-kayak-instructor/>

Level 3 Kayak Instructor:

This person is qualified to instruct intermediate kayaking skills and lead kayak trips on Grade II water with groups of up to 6 students. Also qualified to instruct basic kayaking skills and lead kayaking journeys on flat water with groups of up to 8 students. They are able to train and assess for the Canoeing Ireland Levels 1, 2 and 3 Kayak Skills Awards. They are able to teach intermediate River Safety and Rescue and run RSR 1 and RSR 2 Training Courses.

<https://www.canoe.ie/level-3-river-instructor/>

Level 3 PaddleSurf Instructor:

This person is qualified to instruct intermediate kayaking skills and lead groups of up to six people in small surf(2-3 Feet/waist high). A Level 3 Paddlesurf Instructor is specifically not qualified to lead and/or construct groups on reef breaks. Train and Assess for the Canoeing Ireland 1,2, and 3 Paddlesurf Skills Award. Mentor Level 1, 2 and 3 Kayak instructor trainees.

<https://www.canoe.ie/level-3-paddlesurf-instructor/>

Level 4 Kayak Instructor:

This person is qualified to instruct advanced kayaking skills and lead safe kayaking trips on Grade III/ IV water with groups of up to 4 students. They are able to train and assess for the Canoeing Ireland Levels 1, 2, 3 and 4 Kayak Skills Awards. They are able to teach advanced River Safety and Rescue and run RSR 1, RSR 2 and RSR 3 Training Courses.

<https://www.canoe.ie/level-4-river-kayak-instructor/>

Level 5 Kayak Instructor:

This award is under review as of March 2023

<https://www.canoe.ie/level-5-instructorship/>

It is the responsibility of the Safety, Training and Development officer to organise relevant training and opportunities for all members to be certified for the various instructor levels.

If any members have Instructorship certificates in any other discipline such as Sea kayaking, Canoeing, etc., ULKC will refer back to the relevant schemes provided by canoeing Ireland here,

<https://www.canoe.ie/awards-instructor-coach/>

It is also the duty of the current Captain and/or current Safety Officer to ensure that any internal and external instructors hired have all the relevant qualifications, such as valid REC 3, etc. They also have a responsibility to communicate and update canoeing Ireland with any training organised

Section 3 - Club Activity

3.1 Flatwater

This is defined as any body of water that is stationary or extremely slow moving and without any obstructions.

3.1.1 Ratios

While paddling flatwater all club members will follow relevant guidelines

Level 1 Instructor Supervision:

Under the supervision of a level 1 canoeing ireland certified instructor the group cannot exceed 1:6. They must also stay within the instructor's remit of no further than 300 metres from the entry/exit point and no further than 50 metres offshore.

Level 2 Instructor Supervision:

Under the supervision of a Level 2 Canoeing Ireland Instructor the group cannot exceed 1:6

Level 3 Instructor Supervision

Under the supervision of a level 3 canoeing ireland instructor the group cannot exceed 1:8.

Peer Paddling Flat Water:

If a peer paddle takes place on flatwater, the minimum group size is 2 and the maximum group size is 10. If the group exceeds this they must split to maintain groups less than 10 and either stagger trip beginning times by at least 30 minutes or find another suitable entry point.

For high performance and intermediate level athletes involved in competition training, as determined by the Captain or Safety Training Development Officer; For all other types of paddling 3 is recommended.

While on the water the groups must still remain separate so as to not exceed 10 paddlers per group.

Minimum group size must be 2 as per Canoe Ireland guidelines to 'never paddle alone'

<https://www.canoe.ie/safety-on-the-water/#:~:text=Inform%20yourself%20about%20the%20area%20of%203%20or%20more>.

3.1.2 Outback

Site Specific risk assessment for outback behind the boathouse (in the works).

3.2 Whitewater River

Any body of water graded above grade 1 or flatwater will be subject to this section.

All Grade definitions below are provided and accepted by Canoeing Ireland.

Ratios for all grades: Minimum group size 3

Grade 2:

The way down a river is clear but simple obstructions do exist. Small stoppers and small drops can be present. There are places where the flow accelerates. There is a choice of routes

Grade 3:

There is a route that is easily recognisable from the water. Waves can be irregular. Boulders and obstructions can be numerous. Stoppers and small eddies exist. Inspection is advisable.

Grade 4:

The route is not always clear and inspection is advisable. Rapids are continuous and breakouts are few and small. Stoppers are powerful. Continual manoeuvring with precise control and good decision making is required

Grade 5: Inspection is essential because serious dangers can exist. Large drops, narrow passages, very complex boulder fields, ever changing water and difficult holes are characteristics of this grade. Difficulties are continuous.

3.2.1 Ratios

All river trips must stay within the guidelines set out by Canoeing Ireland

- Listed for instructor CI guidelines section 2.2
- Listed for peer paddling in section 2.1

During a peer paddle The size of any peer group cannot exceed 10 participants on flat water. If more than 10 participants are present, groups must be made and these groups must stagger start times by 30 minutes at a minimum. Group size policy must be upheld while on the water. If this becomes impractical due to exceptional circumstances the Captain and/or Safety officer must be immediately informed.

On rivers grade 2 and above, the following ratios are recommended by Canoeing Ireland;

Grade 2 – 6 to 8 peer paddlers, depending on eddy size on the river.

Grade 3 – 6 Peer paddlers

Grade 4 and above - 4 peer paddlers

3.2.2 Ingress and Egress

When entering the river members should do so from a safe position, that is a position where they can enter their boat safely and enter the water safely. This includes 'Seal Launches', if no other option is suitable and it is safe to do so. All seal launches are carried out at the paddlers own risk.

When exiting the river members should do so from a safe position, that is a position where they can exit the boat safely.

3.3 Paddlesurf

ULKC will operate under CI guidelines for paddlesurf and follow the correct overnight, international and day trip procedures, according to the relevant trip.

<https://www.canoe.ie/paddlesurf/>

3.4 Trips

For all trips organised by the club or its members, the correct procedure must be followed on the UL Wolves website along with the correct submissions made to the Clubs and Societies office i.e. day trips, overnight, foreign. The trips officer and Captain or Safety officer must be made aware of the trip and approve its organisation.

3.4.1 Day Trips

All day trips must follow all Canoeing Ireland guidelines and an instructor will have the final decision on a paddler's suitability to start on or continue on a trip.

Those participating on the trip must be approved by the Captain and Safety Officer when signing up to ensure they are a suitable level to attend the trip. A record of the sign up and signature will be recorded digitally. If a trip's participants or location change at any time they must seek approval through this process again.

Captain and Safety Officer must both be of minimum level 3 CI skills qualification.

3.4.1.1 Peer Paddling

Club peer paddling trips can take place provided the Captain and Safety officer have been made aware of the trip and are satisfied for it to take place. The trip must also meet these requirements:

- All members on the trip must have a valid canoeing Ireland membership.
- All members on the trip must have the appropriate skill proficiency certification to the grade of water in question.
- All members present on the trip must have a valid rec 3 first aid certification.
- The size of any peer group cannot exceed 10 participants. If more than 10 participants are present, groups must be made and these groups must stagger start times by 30 minutes at a minimum. Group size policy must be upheld while on the water. If this becomes impractical due to exceptional circumstances the Captain and/or Safety officer must be immediately informed. See section 3.2.1 for recommended ratios.

- Peer paddlers may only paddle at the grade (or below) that their skill award allows and must be within the normal river levels for that grade.
- Peer paddling groups must not bring/lead any paddlers of a lower skills award under their care.

It is the responsibility of each participant on the trip to ensure these requirements listed are met.

If ULKC becomes aware of any breach of these policies all participants present will receive a warning along with a follow up investigation and further disciplinary action (see ULKC Constitution for further information on disciplinary action).

If any additional participants present themselves for the trip, members and non-members inclusive it is the responsibility of all ULKC members present to ensure the above policies are still upheld.

3.4.2 Overnight Trips

For all trips organised by the club or its members, the correct procedure must be followed on the UL Wolves website along with the correct submissions made to the Clubs and Societies office i.e. day trips, overnight, foreign. The trips officer and Captain or Safety officer must be made aware of the trip and approve its organisation.

While on foreign trips current guidelines and standards set out by this document and Canoeing Ireland must still be upheld.

Canoeing Ireland guidelines and ratios must be upheld on these trips. Any instructors involved in these trips must additionally request the standard of members they believe is necessary for the trip. Trips that are peer paddled while overnight must have all members approved to be fit by Captain and Safety Officer.

Additionally there will be a selection committee assigned for overnight trips in order to assess which members will be selected for these overnight trips. This will take paddling ability, paddling mentality, club involvement, instructor opinions on paddler and other factors into account. This will ensure that those on the trip are at an appropriate standard.

Until the next annual review of this statement, all foreign trips will be fully-instructor led with no peer paddling abroad.

Section 4 - Safety Trainings

4.1 Safety Courses

Different safety courses run approved by Canoeing Ireland will be organised by the ULKC. These certifications help fulfil certain requirements needed to reach personal paddling certifications as well as instructor certifications. Other training will not be allowed as a substitute, but rather additions for personal use.

4.1.1 - River Safety Rescue Courses (RSR)

The River Safety Rescue scheme has 3 awards.

RSR 1: This provides training in safety and rescue useful for grade 1 waters

RSR 2: This provides training in Safety and Rescue useful for grade 2 waters

RSR 3: This provides training in Safety and Rescue useful for grade 3 waters

It is the responsibility of the Safety, Training and Development officer to organise relevant training and opportunities for all members to be certified for the various levels of RSR.

4.1.2 Whitewater Tech

In Addition when possible other training such as the Whitewater rescue technician course will be provided, these courses will not be accepted by ULKC as a substitute of RSR training only as an addition to it.

4.2 First Aid (REC)

It is the responsibility of the Safety, Training and Development officer to organise relevant training and opportunities for all members to be certified with REC 3 First Aid.

Rescue Emergency Care level 3 has an internationally recognised curriculum. The course fulfils the requirements of all major sporting governing bodies including Mountaineering Ireland and Canoe Ireland. It is run by outdoor medical experts with experience in both the medical field and in outdoor pursuits.

If members have other First Aid training it will be accepted as an addition to REC 3 but will not be accepted as a substitute. Only with exception to progressing from REC 3 to REC 4 as it is a part of the same scheme and recognised by sporting governing bodies.

4.3 Safety Equipment Handling

Members can use club owned safety equipment on any club trip provided they have the relevant certifications and training in using the equipment. Exceptions to this apply if members are using the equipment while on a training course which will result in them becoming certified to use the

equipment. Ie RSR training course/assessment, Skills proficiency training course/assessment, Instructor training course/assessment , etc.

When carrying ropes and/or slings the paddler must also be carrying a knife or some other method of cutting the rope/sling in the case of an entanglement.

Club owned first aid kits can only be in the possession of members who have a valid REC 3 certification at minimum and the contents can only be used by members with a valid REC 3 certification.

Club owned pin kits and mechanical advantage equipment can only be used by members with the correct relevant certifications ie. RSR 2, WRT, etc.

If anyone is found to be in breach of these policies they will be given an immediate warning which will lead to a follow up investigation and further disciplinary action in line with the club constitution .

Any members found to be teaching/instructor/coaching others to use safety equipment without any relevant instructor certifications will also receive a warning and will be subject to a follow up investigation where further disciplinary action may be undertaken in line with the club constitution.

4.4 Weather Assessment

One must have the proper qualifications whether in a peer paddle group, or an instructor taking a group out in order to properly assess the weather. See Section 2 for these qualifications
ULKC will always follow guidelines from the national state weather forecasting service of whichever country a trip is happening in with regards to all weather situations. All Canoeing Ireland skills, instructor and RSR training contain modules on weather assessment and precautions one should take.

If any member is found to breach public guidelines or guidelines during weather warnings, they will receive a warning with a follow up investigation and further disciplinary action

4.5 Risk Assessment

One must have the proper qualifications whether in a peer paddle group, or an instructor taking a group out in order to properly assess the risk. See Section 2 for these qualifications
To complete the risk assessment (in the works)

Section 5 - Kayaking/Canoeing Hazards

5.1 Kayaking/Canoeing risk

Risk: Kayaking/Canoeing is deemed a high-risk activity

People at Risk: All involved

5.2 Hazards

- Drowning
- Injury from equipment or capsizing (concussion, etc.)
- Separation of person from kayak/canoe
- Manual handling injury
- Capsizing and entrapment
- Slips, trips and falls
- Collisions
- Weather and conditions
- Hypothermia
- Bacterial and viral infections (i.e. leptospirosis)

5.3 Control Measures

- All participants must wear appropriate clothing on a kayaking/canoeing session. The prerequisites include a correctly fitted CE393 buoyancy aid (minimum 50 Newtons) with reflective strips, a wetsuit and a helmet. Spray decks may be worn where the instructor is satisfied with the participants proficiency (being able to perform a calm and capable drill). It is compulsory that all kayakers/canoeists from the club wear the club's buoyancy aids, alternatively they may wear their own buoyancy aid if it meets the club's minimum standard.
- All kayaking/canoeing participants that sign up for the trip will have their attendance signed-off by Captain and Safety Officer before attending a trip. During a trip they can also be assessed by a Canoeing Ireland certified instructor after launching and only participants of capable abilities will be allowed to continue.
- If a canoe/kayak has capsized, the instructor or a member who has a level 2 Canoeing Ireland certification and RSR qualification can carry out necessary rescue techniques on flatwater, e.g X-Rescue.
- The club adheres to all Canoeing Ireland recommendations regarding teaching ratios (see Section 3.1 for Flatwater ratios, see Section 3.1 for Whitewater Ratios, see Section 3.3 for Paddlesurf Ratios)
- The club adheres to all Canoeing Ireland recommendations regarding peer paddling ratios (see Section 3.1 for Flatwater ratios, see Section 3.1 for Whitewater Ratios, see Section 3.3 for Paddlesurf Ratios)

- Care should be taken to avoid prolonged exposure in the water to avoid hypothermia.
- Paddlers can not paddle in club activity if they have consumed alcohol or taken recreational drugs beforehand or are ill as a result of consuming alcohol or recreational drugs. The Captain and Safety Officer have the final decision on trip attendance by any club member.
- Depending on the cause and the severity of an accident, first aid will be provided by appropriately trained club members. If further medical assistance is required, the person/persons in charge will ensure this is provided
- The possibility of infection from the water and riverbank will be brought to the attention of participants and water and soap or antibacterial gel should be always available in the first aid kits.

5.3.1 Water Activities Criteria

- A CE approved PFD with minimum of 50 Newton with reflective tape must be worn.
- Appropriate standard of equipment (refer to section 8).
- Adequate safety equipment is required
- ULKC implements a policy of ‘Challenge by Choice’ and ‘Sport for All’, allowing participation by a participant who has knowledge of the risks involved. Every member is made aware of the risks involved when they sign up for membership and the safety statement is available to be viewed by all club members.
- ULKC must be informed of all disabilities/illnesses prior to the commencement of the activity.
- In the event of lightning, all water activity must be terminated immediately.
- Peer paddling trips using club equipment can only take place if following the safety statement, following the safety requirements (see Section 8 for further equipment information).

5.4 Accidents

5.4.1. Accident Report Form

Accidents are defined as incidents where a person is injured to such an extent that they require first aid or other medical treatment. Accidents that occur as a result of the club’s activities must be investigated, recorded on the SU report form (form attached in the appendix) and a copy sent to the SU within 5 days of the accident occurring.

5.5 Insurance of club members

5.5.1 Member’s insurance

Members are insured against personal injury while participating in club activities

- Club activities are defined as:
 - Official trips organised by the Trips Officer and approved by the Captain and Safety Officer

- Competition trips that have been defined as club trips by the ULKC committee
- Personal trips that follow the Personal Trip Safety Guidelines (See Section 2 for Paddling requirements, see Section 3 for activity-specific requirements)

5.5.2 Non-members

Non members are not insured The SU will deal with claims that may arise. The committee must ensure members are signed up on the UL Wolves registration system and that each account has been activated, which is only to happen after the annual membership fee of €8 has been received by the club.

5.6 Serious Accidents, Fatalities and Near Misses

Serious accidents or fatalities must be reported to the Development Officers, Paul Lee or Aisling Ryan, as soon as possible. If Paul is not available, the Secretary General must be notified or the President of the Student's Union.

Near misses can be defined as something that happened but did not result in medical attention but requires attention as it showed something that could be learned from that experience. All near misses will be recorded and a digital record will be kept and reviewed at least every six months. Any learning as a result of near misses or accidents will be added to the safety statement.

Section 6 - Pool Sessions

When members are participating in pool training, they shall adhere to all pool rules without exception.

6.1 Swim Test

All members must complete a swim test before taking part in pool sessions. This will be administered by a club member who is a level 2 instructor or has completed level 2 instructor training, and then reported back to the committee. The swim test consists of swimming across the width of the pool across and back with no assistance from any pool floats.

6.2 Capsize Drills

After a swim test has been completed, a capsize drill must be completed, administered by a club member who is a level 2 instructor or has completed level 2 instructor training. A capsize drill consists of turning over in a kayak and exiting the kayak. This will be completed first without a spraydeck and then with a spraydeck on.

6.3 Structure

Basic kayaking skills will be taught in the pool.

6.4 Pool Statement

A statement from pool staff regarding club activity in the pool can be found in appendices.

6.5 Risk Assessment for Pool

(in the works)

Section 7 - Boathouse Hazards

7.1 Manual handling

Control measures;

All members must follow correct manual handling procedures.

- Stand close to the boat.
- Bend your knees and keep your back straight.
- Grasp the boat firmly.
- Lift with your legs, not your back.
- Never lift a boat that is too heavy, ask for help

Boats on high racks must not be removed by oneself (No climbing on racks)

Only lift a boat that is within your lifting capacity.

7.2 Electrical shock

Control Measures;

All electrical fixtures have been installed by qualified electricians and are deemed suitable for use in the relevant area. If for any reason there is an electrical fault, UL Buildings and Estates will be notified.

7.3 Trips/Slips/Falls

Control Measures;

The showers and changing rooms are kept dry when possible.

The slipways are all kept clean and monitored.

The floors of the lecture room and reception area are kept dry as much as possible and if they cannot be dried there are signs to mark wet areas.

7.4 Fire safety

Control Measures;

Fire escape routes must be kept free of obstruction at all times

All fire equipment should be kept up to date and in good working order (the responsibility of this is placed on the management of the building)

In the event of a fire, members should evacuate and contact the emergency services. Members should only attempt to fight the fire if it is safe to do so.

7.5 Knife Safety

Control measures;

Any knives disposed must be in a sealed container before disposal

A box labelled 'broken sharps' for waste with sharp edges will be provided by the club and disposed of properly by the in term equipment officer

7.6 Robbery

In the event of a robbery of the boathouse, club members must put their own safety first and alert the Gardaí when it is safe to do so and the Captain must be notified.

Section 8 - Equipment

8.1 Maintaining Equipment

The safety and suitability of equipment is primarily the responsibility of the Club Equipment Officer. This person shall adhere to the maintenance guidelines of each of the manufacturers equipment standards. Gear must only be used, cleaned and serviced by members deemed competent by the in seat equipment officers. A major inspection will be carried out twice yearly by the Equipment Officer and general inspections are to be carried out before and after each club trip.

8.2 Safety Equipment

All safety equipment must be inspected and approved by the Safety Officer and Equipment Officer before use on trips. It must also be reviewed by members deemed competent before every trip.

8.2.1 First Aid Kits

River trips must have at least one first aid kit present in each river group. Safety Officer and Equipment shall refer to the First Aid Kit Checklist (there are first aid equipment recommendations on canoeing Ireland instructor awards pages) to deem the First Aid Kit fit for use. The First Aid Kits will undergo regular inspection, additionally, there will be an inspection annually to replace any items within them that have expired. After use on a trip, the kits must be dried out and any items used must be replaced before using the kit again.

8.2.2 Buoyancy Aids

Club Buoyancy Aids must undergo an in depth annual inspection to ensure they follow safety guidelines set by Peak UK. This included looking for “holes and rips, excessive fading of fabric, damage of webbing, buckles and zips.” Additionally, the uplift of the Buoyancy Aids must be tested. See Peak UK website for guidance on this: <https://peakuk.com/pfd-guidelines>

8.2.3 Helmets

Club Helmets must undergo an in depth regular inspection, especially in the case of trips where helmets may have endured a hit. Club will follow sweet protection guidelines on maintenance. During the pre-check before each use a visual inspection must be carried out to ensure that “nothing is badly torn, worn or missing.” If the helmet “suffered from a major impact in an accident, or has received a similarly severe blow..” it shall be immediately decommissioned. See Sweet Protection website for further guidance:

<https://www.sweetprotection.com/en/blog/tech/tech-product-care.html>

8.2.4 Ropes

Club Throw Ropes must undergo inspection before every use ensuring that there are no cuts, snags in outer sheath, no white core visible, no contamination (fuel, strong smell, etc.), frays at the end. After use they must be daisy chained and left to dry before being repacked. Regular inspections must also be completed by Safety and Equipment Officer. For further guidance on care, follow 'Palm Pro Throwline Inspection, care and maintenance guide':

<https://palmequipmenteurope.com/gb/content/17-care-for-your-gear>

8.3 Gear Handling

All gear shall be signed out by members and adhere to guidelines below

8.3.1 Gear Signout

When members are deemed competent to inspect gear, after they complete their pre-use check, they must sign out the gear for use post inspection. This is done via online form and must be completed. Additionally, any damaged or broken gear found during this check must be reported through this form. If this action is not completed, view the Gear Policy for disciplinary procedures.

8.3.2 Gear Inventory

All gear shall be added to an inventory when purchased by the club and be removed from this inventory when either decommissioned or sold. This inventory must be fully reviewed and updated at least once yearly.

8.4 Loaning of Equipment

Club Equipment or equipment belonging to the University must not be loaned to third parties who are not members of the SU club. A club member must not borrow equipment for use by third parties even if the club member is present or in the group using the equipment.

Section 9 - Vehicles

9.1 Drivers

Vehicles used by the club are provided by the UL Student Life. These vehicles may only be driven by C&S approved drivers that have been endorsed by the club. Drivers will adhere to 'Rules of the Road' outlined by the Road Safety Authority. Further guidance on this can be found at the rsa.ie website regarding rules of road. Further guidance on becoming a driver and the ULSU's policies and procedures can be found here: <https://ulwolves.ie/support/resources> under the 'Vehicles/Drivers' section.

9.1.1 Competency test/licence

All drivers will have received the appropriate licensing for each vehicle. Each driver will also have to take a competency test arranged through UL Student Life if they fulfil the insurers requirements.

9.1.2 Visual inspection of vehicles

The driver will ensure that the vehicle is in good condition prior to starting the trip. A visual inspection will be made of:

Tires: ensure no obvious cuts, there is adequate thread, and proper inflation.

Windscreen: ensure there are no cracks.

Oil/water/brake fluid: ensure no leaks coming from the vehicle.

Engine: upon starting the engine the driver will listen for unusual sounds that may indicate damage.

9.2 Safety equipment

The vehicle should be equipped with suitable emergency equipment. This should include: reflective warning triangle, basic tools, fire extinguishers, torch, and first aid kit

9.3 Trailer/Tow

When towing a trailer a lightening board displaying the registration number of the vehicle will be used. Before use the trailer must be inspected. This should include inspection of tyre wear and pressure, hitch and lights, and balanced loading. When towing a trailer, the use of the jockey wheel shall be used for all manoeuvring of the trailer onto the tow hitch of the vehicle.

Section 10 - Non-Kayaking Activities

10.1 Purchasing of services

Where the club uses the facilities of a service provider or equipment belonging to a service provider an officer of the club must ensure that the service provider has public liability insurance. A copy of the certificate of insurance should be obtained by an officer of the club prior to the use of the venue or equipment. A copy of the insurance certificate must be given to the Development Officer Paul Lee.

Ensure that the insurance policy wording does not exclude any of the activities that your club will be participating in. If the service provider cannot provide a certificate, then the club should use an alternative service provider.

10.2 Hiring of Venues

If a venue (external to UL) is to be used by the club for its own activities or for events a club officer should ensure that there are sufficient trained security persons at the venue for the duration of the event (if required). The officer must clarify whether the venue will provide these or if they need to be supplied by the club. If there is any doubt about numbers of security the Ents Committee should be consulted.

The club officer should also request the venue manager to sign the declaration set out in the form. This form is a fire safety declaration of compliance with the relevant legislation and provides assurance to the club's officers that the venue is safe from a fire safety perspective. This form is not required when clubs or societies are using conventional venues such as hotel function rooms and nightclubs but is needed when hiring hall, marquees and venues not usually used for large groups.

10.3 Hiring of Transportation

When hiring minibuses or other vehicles for club outings only those named as drivers (with the appropriate driver's licence) are insured to drive the vehicle. Other club members must not drive. Where possible only minibuses fitted with seat belts should be hired, check with the hire company beforehand.

Section 11 - Role of Members

11.1 Member Responsibilities

Clubs and societies endeavour to offer either members a safe environment in which to participate in activities. The Officers will, to the best of their abilities, bring the attention of members the risks associated with the activities. However, members are expected to make themselves aware of hazards and to be responsible for their own health and safety.

Members are expected to follow instructions given by Officers and Trips leaders. They must not jeopardise the health and safety of other members through their own actions. Members should inform Officers of medical conditions that might impede on their ability to participate. They must also wear all personal protective equipment as instructed.

Members are also responsible for obtaining as much information as possible about any planned activity, to be able to make an informed decision as to whether it is a suitable activity for them.

11.2 Alcohol and Drug Policy

No member may get on the water under the influence of drugs/alcohol or consume drugs/alcohol on the water or during breaks off the water. Drug or alcohol consumption in breach of these restrictions is strictly prohibited as it risks the safety and comfort of other members and will be regarded as a disciplinary matter.

All members are required to bring this policy to the attention of new members, if they see anyone consuming or misusing drugs, or appears to be under the influence of either or report them to the Club Safety Officer.

11.3 Bullying Policy

Clubs and societies of UL Student Life do not tolerate bullying. Bullying is repeated aggression, verbal, psychological or physical, conducted by an individual or group against another person or persons. Sanctions will be taken against those found to be in breach of the policy. Club or society members should contact the Welfare Officer for assistance on this issue. Refer to _____ (add section to the constitution regarding bullying) the Clubs and Societies Bullying Policy.

Section 12 Appendix

Accident report forum: <https://ulwolves.ie/support/resources>

View 'SU Incident Report Form'

Letter from pool claiming responsibility

The UL Kayak Club utilises the National 50m Swimming Pool at UL Sport Arena on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings for club training throughout the academic year.

As per UL Aquatics Normal Operating Procedure, clubs such as ULKC are supervised by their coaches and club personnel who hold up to date and relevant qualifications in their sport. While the pool is closed to the general public and casual swimming during their training hours, ULKC may share pool space with other UL clubs. This occurs each Wednesday evening, where UL Swim Club utilises two 50m side lanes of the pool and where a third "buffer" lane separates the two groups. ULKC use this particular session for skills training. Canoe polo only takes place on Thursday evening where ULKC are the sole occupants of the pool.

UL Sport provides qualified lifeguard staff to support ULKC staff in the event that assistance is required. Lifeguards hold up to date qualifications awarded by Water Safety Ireland or international Governing Body equivalent. In addition, lifeguards undertake compulsory in-house staff training and must meet expectations in a variety of tests, which include timed swims, basic life support, use of the automated external defibrillator, use of the oxygen cylinder, safeguarding, lifesaving skills, rescue skills, staged incidents and a 3.8m surface dive.

Alan Ward, M.A (Public Management)
Manager
National 50m Swimming Pool
Department of Sport and Recreation
University of Limerick

Letter of proof of annual review

This Safety Statement was reviewed and adjusted on the 9th of March 2024 by Isobel Reidy (Captain), Odran Furlong (Safety Training Development Officer), Eve Mahon (Ass. STD), Orlagh O'Regan (Secretary) and Lily Michaud (Trips Officer).

Isobel Reidy,
ULKC Captain.

Section 13 References:

Canoeing Ireland <https://www.canoe.ie/>

Peak UK <https://peakuk.com/pfd-guidelines>

Sweet Protection <https://www.sweetprotection.com/en/blog/tech/tech-product-care.html>

Palm Equipment <https://palmequipmenteurope.com/gb/content/17-care-for-your-gear>

Road Safety Authority: <https://www.rsa.ie/services/learner-drivers/resources/rules-of-the-road>